

**U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.)**

**Floor Speech**

**February 1, 2023**

Madam President. In less than a week, President Biden will deliver his State of the Union Address to the nation.

In the build up to that speech, we're already seeing the President and his administration spinning a tale about just how wonderful things are in this country—particularly after they took power and racked up more than \$3.0 trillion in more spending.

Unfortunately, those tall tales do not reflect reality for the people in my home state of Mississippi and across the nation.

In the two years since President Biden took office, we've seen his administration fail the American people time and time again.

Inflation was 1.4 percent back in January 2021, but the policies the President has forced on the nation since then have made daily living unaffordable for families.

Today, a strong majority of Americans — more than 70 percent — believe the country is on the wrong track, and it's easy to understand why.

Too many workers and families now live paycheck to paycheck, trying to keep the lights on, put food on the table, get gas in their cars, and stock everyday essentials.

President Biden's inflationary runaway spending is a root cause of the sky-high prices we're paying for all goods and services. Not a single industry is spared the cost of this inflation.

Since Joe Biden took office, higher prices have cost families an additional \$10,000 and there seems to be no end in sight.

Prices have gone up across the board to 13.5 percent, and grocery costs have jumped by 18.6 percent.

Just look at the price of essential staples: chicken breast prices have gone up by 33 percent; ground beef, whole milk, and bread have gone up by 21 percent.

Unlike President Biden, I actually have to take a trip to the grocery store to feed my family, and I see firsthand how these price increases affect the people of Mississippi.

In the checkout line, I've watched a mother forced to put something back on the shelf after realizing she can't afford everything in her cart. I've seen a retired husband grabbing only the bare necessities for the week. I've heard the chatter in the aisles about how it's all so much more expensive. It breaks my heart to see the individuals in my community and the nation struggling to get by.

It shouldn't be this way, but in Joe Biden's America, we're forced to weigh our priorities on buying groceries, prescriptions, or putting gas in the car.

When it comes to energy prices, the hardship continues for many Americans.

This pain is 100 percent self-inflicted by the Biden Administration's stubborn refusal to maximize American energy production.

According to Census data, about 22 percent of American households could not pay their energy bill last year.

When families were actually able to pay, they had to sacrifice other necessities such as groceries, medicine, or gasoline.

This winter isn't bringing any relief either. Compared to last winter, the average household will spend upward of 28 percent more to heat their home with natural gas, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Electricity rates are also expected to continue to rise due to lower domestic supply of liquefied natural gas as well as labor shortages and cost of materials.

But this should come as no surprise since the attack on American energy began on day one of the Biden presidency. In fact, this administration's regulatory overreach also contributes to rising costs across our economy.

Despite record-high prices, Joe Biden wants to further regulate the agriculture industry.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service, for instance, is studying line speeds of poultry plants with the ultimate goal of slowing them down, which will affect costs and supplies in grocery stores.

In addition, the EPA recently unveiled its new Waters of the United States rule, which will further hamper the ability of farmers to grow food because the federal government will have the ability to regulate ditches and low spots on private land.

And it's a basic fact that it's expensive to comply with overly burdensome regulations.

The Biden Administration's desire to over-regulate everything makes it seem as if the President wants Americans to struggle to afford food.

Madam President, the American people are smart and they understand when things aren't going well.

The rosy stories the White House will barrage us with before the State of the Union Address won't change the fact the American dream seems far from attainable for hardworking families because we can't afford Joe Biden.

My colleagues and I want to get our economy back on track to relieve the financial stress that families are experiencing.

We must stop the irresponsible government spending, unleash American energy production, cut regulations, and embrace pro-growth commonsense policies. The American people deserve that.

I yield the floor.